

To: Guilderland Planning Board
From: Guilderland Conservation Advisory Council
Date: May 28, 2004
Re.: Subdivision of Dutchmen Acres – School Rd., Guilderland Center, NY

APPLICATION

Applicants: Gregg Meyer, 9 Vly Rd., Albany, NY 12205

Proposed Subdivision: A 34-lot subdivision of 38.39 acres.

Location: School Rd. across from Guilderland Central High School

Zoning: R-15

SITE INSPECTION SUMMARY

Site Inspection Date: May 22, 2004

Meeting Attendees: (May 17, 2004) Gregg Meyer (applicant); GCAC members Lindsay Childs, Herbert Hennings, Lillie McNulty, Daniel Muth, Stuart Reese, Steve Wixted and John Wemple (Chair).

Inspected by: Gregg Meyer (applicant) and his brother Chris Meyer; GCAC members Lindsay Childs, Lillie McNulty, Daniel Muth, Stuart Reese, Steve Wixted and John Wemple (Chair).

Conclusions: While existing residents of the School Road neighborhood may have reservations regarding developing this area which they may have considered their open space, GCAC sees no real negative environmental impact of the development provided the wetlands are protected and any disturbance to it is minimized. An acceptable storm water management plan should be very essential and of high priority to the approval of this subdivision. Potential traffic congestion resulting from the development will need to be avoided in the final plans related to its access roadways. Since much of the property along School Road is open fields, provision should be made for appropriate landscaping and tree planting to make the site more pleasing to the neighborhood. One neighbor was concerned regarding the current zoning of this property and questioned as to whether or not it was actually zoned R-15. According to available zoning map, it is R-15. This can be checked by the Planning Board.

Clustering this development from R-15 to R-10 could provide more flexibility in buffering the Black Creek and avoiding the wetlands scattered around the parcel. It could also permit the development to have no residences fronting on Depot Road (which has 45 mph traffic). R-10 lots would be compatible with a "village" feel to this parcel, which is within easy walking distance to the center of Guilderland Center.

Submitted by:

 5/28/04
John G. Wemple, Jr. - Chairperson

INSPECTION DETAILS

Site: Dutchmen Acres – School Rd., Guilderland Center

Date: May 22, 2004

Topography: This 38.39 acre parcel is relatively flat and is described by the applicant as having a little rise going back and then drifts down. Topozone map shows elevation of approximately 330 ft. AMSL at the front section across from the High School and about 320 ft. AMSL along the Black Creek at the rear of the property. At time of site visit, it was noted that there is a mound several feet high with a ditch next to it toward the rear of proposed lot 27. There is a ditch along at least some of the property along Depot Road (County Route 201). It was noted that the west corner of Lot 33 is a little higher in elevation just beyond an area of wetlands which covers the south corner of that lot. A slight drop was also noted to the rear of Lot 7 near the end of Nielsen Road.

Vegetation/Trees: There is a tree line at the south corner as well as many deciduous trees near the southwest and western portion especially along the outer perimeter of the property. Along with this, there is heavy brush adjacent to these wooded areas. A hedge row crosses the property about 900 feet back from School Road. There is also a large area of a wet lands plant identified as purple lout strife. It was noted that there was a mowed area approximately were the rear portion of Lots 6 and 8 are proposed. Trees noted by the presenter include oak, pine, cherry as well as a berm in back of Lot 17.

Soil: Presenter stated that a 12 inch soil sample had been taken resulting in soil being identified as having a lot of clay and clay mix.

Sheets 11 and 18 of the Soil Survey of Albany County indicates the soil at this site is VaB, Valois gravelly loam, close to School Road and otherwise HnB, Hornell silt loam, in the non-wetland areas and Ae, Allis silt loam, in the wetland areas. Valois gravelly loam is very deep and well-drained, with a seasonal high water table at a depth of more than 6 feet. This soil is among the best suited soils in the county for cultivated crops, and has no limitations for dwellings with basements. Hornell silt loam is moderately deep and somewhat poorly drained. The seasonal high water table is perched above the clayey subsoil at a depth of 6 to 18 inches from December to May. Depth to bedrock is 20 to 40 inches. Permeability is moderate in the surface layer (the top 7 inches or so) and slow or very slow in the subsoil. The soil is moderately suited to cultivated crops or pasture, with the seasonal high water table a liability. The main limitation for dwellings with basements is the seasonal high water table. The main limitation for local roads is the seasonal high water table and low strength. Allis silt loam is moderately deep and poorly drained. The seasonal high water table is at a depth of less than one foot and is perched on the silty clay loam subsoil November to June. Most areas of this soil are brushland. The soil is poorly suited to cultivated crops, moderately suited to pasture. The main limitations for dwellings with basements is the seasonal high water table and the depth to bedrock (20 to 40 inches). The main limitation for local roads is the seasonal high water table and low strength.

Drainage/Wetlands: Presenter stated that the wetlands have been identified by Dave Engles but not confirmed by Army Corps of Engineers; and that there are no NY State wetlands. At time of site visit the wetlands were well defined by flags. Presenter appeared to be aware of requirement for storm water management. He further stated that he was not going to do a lot a filling. There is a question of whether or not the wet area on Lots 6 and 8 are connected wetlands. Nevertheless this is one area which most likely will be filled in as part of the development. There is a sizeable wetland

area on the back portion of Lots 10, 12, 14 and 16 with the rear portion of 14 and 16 noticeable damp at time of My 22 site visit. There was a narrow area of water across the proposed roadway (Dutchmen Terrace) near the northwest corner of Lot 16. There was also an area of water on the wetland area about 1200 feet back from School Road about 100 ft.± from Depot Road. The wetland area to the northeast of this, which is near the center of the property, will also need fill to accommodate the proposed roadway. At time of site visit, there was considerable water in the ditch along Depot Road with cattails adjacent to Lot 30. Therefore, a sizeable culvert may be required in the construction of the curb cut for proposed Hollandale roadway between Lots 30 and 31. Cattails were also seen along Depot Road along the roadside of Lot 34. Some wetlands on the site drawing, especially on Lots 10, 12, 14 and 16, are being considered for a possible 4 to 1 swap of land the details for which would need to be worked out with the applicant, the Town and the Corps of Engineers. The applicant was not sure just where the drainage from the property along Depot Road ends up although it might be assumed that it ends up in the Black Creek. Far northern boundary of the property is the Black Creek (note: midway along Lot 34 the Black Creek turns north away from the property). The proposed plan shows a 100 ft. buffer from the Black Creek which reportedly still provides sufficient area for the residential construction including Lot 25 which is quite restricted due to this buffer.

Septic/Wells: Plan calls for hookup to Town water and Town sewer system. Hookup would be along School Road opposite the High School.

Visual Impact: Applicant plans to have creative design and options esthetically pleasing to the neighbors and has also provided for a buffer along the Black Creek. Added traffic along School Road, at least during the school year, will be on concern and may create some congestion.

Endangered species: None known to the applicant. Sensitivity of the Black Creek and avoidance of pollutants and contamination to the Creek will need to be considered in the plan for development.

Historical Considerations: None known to the applicant and none observed at time of site visit.

Submitted By: John G. Wemple, Jr. 5/28/04
John G. Wemple, Jr. - Chairperson